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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3511th meeting of the Security Council, held on 29 March 1995, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Burundi", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council is deeply concerned about the escalation of violence in Burundi. It condemns the murders of the Minister of Energy and Mines and of the former Mayor of Bujumbura by extremists, and deplores the ensuing ethnic killings of many people that have caused thousands to flee their homes. It stresses the futility of resorting to violence and condemns the activities of the extremist elements who try to destabilize the country and threaten the whole region. It encourages all States to take the measures deemed necessary to prevent them from travelling abroad and receiving any kind of support. It reaffirms its determination to support the Convention of Government of 10 September 1994, the provisions of which constitute the institutional framework for the necessary national reconciliation. The Council calls on all political parties, military forces and all elements of civil society fully to respect and implement it in a spirit of dialogue, moderation and compromise.

"The Security Council urges all parties to work together to further the dialogue. It underlines the urgency of organizing, in accordance with the Convention of Government, a national debate with the participation of all elements of the nation with a view to consolidating national reconciliation and restoring democracy. It invites the Secretary-General to help the various political parties and elements of civil society to initiate this comprehensive consultation.

"The Security Council warns that those who commit crimes against humanity are individually responsible for their crimes, and will be brought to justice. The Council specifically warns that if acts of genocide are committed in Burundi, it will consider taking appropriate measures to bring to justice under international law any who may have committed such acts.

"The Security Council reaffirms its view that the perception of impunity is a fundamental problem in Burundi, one which seriously endangers security in the country. The Council expresses once again its grave concern at reports indicating that systematic, widespread and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law have been committed in Burundi.

"The Security Council recalls the statement by the President of the Security Council of 9 March 1995 (S/PRST/1995/10), in which the Security Council, inter alia, underlined the role that could be played in Burundi by an international commission of inquiry into the October 1993 coup attempt and into the massacres that followed. It requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council on an urgent basis on what steps should be taken to establish such an impartial commission of inquiry.

"The Security Council favours measures to restore a state of law and improve the functioning of the judicial system. It also favours the organization of a round table of donors. It urges States to provide for these projects financial contributions directly or through a trust fund to be created for this purpose.

"The Security Council supports the reinforcement of the action decided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and welcomes the dispatching of experts.

"The Security Council pays tribute to the actions taken by the Organization of African Unity (OAU). It calls upon the OAU and its members in the subregion to continue to use their influence to help stabilize the situation in Burundi. It further calls upon all States, in particular neighbouring States, to refrain from supplying or allowing the transit of arms and to deny sanctuary and any other assistance to those extremist elements which seek to destabilize the situation in Burundi.

"Aware of the close interconnection between various humanitarian and political problems in the region and of the risk of subsequent destabilization, the Security Council reaffirms its support for a regional conference on peace, stability and security and calls upon the countries of the region to convene such a conference as a matter of urgency.

"The Security Council remains seized of the matter. The Council will consider taking action as the situation demands."